



The United States Conference of Mayors

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Mayors Call for \$4 Billion in Energy and Environmental Block Grant at 75th Winter Meeting of The U.S. Conference of Mayors

Mayors Launch Campaign to Create a “Climate of Change” in Washington, Urge Congress to Act Now

Washington, D.C. – Today, the nation’s mayors called for \$4 billion in an Energy and Environmental Block Grant to help cities combat global warming. The mayors also launched a major campaign to create a “climate of change” in Washington.

“Cities are on the frontlines of climate change with mayors leading the way. But we can’t do it alone. We need the federal government to be a real partner with us on the issues of climate protection and achieving energy independence. That is why we are proposing an Energy and Environmental Block Grant,” said Conference President and Trenton, NJ Mayor Douglas H. Palmer.

The block grant would provide funding directly to cities and urban counties for programs that:

- improve community energy efficiency;
- reduce carbon emissions; and
- decrease the nation’s dependence on foreign oil.

Some cities have already created innovative programs to fight global warming without any support from the federal government. A few examples of these best practices are:

- Austin, TX Mayor Will Wynn promoting wind energy and plug-in hybrids.
- Charlotte, NC Mayor Patrick McCrory building mass transit and engaging his community on smart land use planning.
- Carmel, IN Mayor James Brainard promoting fuel efficiency, hydrogen cars, and massive tree plantings.

To date, more than 372 mayors from all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, have signed onto the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, led by Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, where mayors have pledged to take actions to cut their emissions in line with the Kyoto Protocols. Additionally, the Conference of Mayors has held two national energy summits focused on alternative fuel sources and green buildings.

Representing millions of Americans in cities across the nation, mayors are kicking off this climate campaign and taking their message to Capitol Hill to create a “climate of change” in Washington.

“Change is in the air and the time to act is now,” said Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, Co-chair of the Mayor’s Council on Climate Protection, who launched the grassroots Climate Protection Agreement two years ago. “In Seattle, we are showing that you can power a city without toasting a planet. Now we need our leaders in Washington to step up to the forefront of the effort to protect our climate by adopting the aggressive but achievable goal of cutting emissions 80 percent nationwide by 2050.”

The mayors also outlined three requests of the 110th Congress:

- Establish a national cap on greenhouse gas emissions and a flexible market-based system of tradable allowances for emitting industries;
- Pass climate-friendly energy and transportation policies; create funding and incentives to help cities in their efforts to curb emissions; and
- Create funding and incentives to help cities in their effort to curb emissions.

“I believe the Congressional Council for climate change legislation has fundamentally improved as a result of the November elections,” said Congressman Edward J. Markey (D-MA), senior member of the House Energy and Commerce and Natural Resources Committees. “Now is the time for action to halt the generation of greenhouse gases before we reach the tipping point of an irreversible climate catastrophe. State and local governments have been leading the way on many of these issues in recent years. Now we have the ability to move forward on global warming and energy independence in the Congress as well.”

The nation’s mayors are urging Congress to pass significant climate protection legislation and restore America’s leadership in the battle to combat global warming. “We can no longer afford to stand by while this threat to our cities, our country, and our planet grows,” said Carmel, Indiana Mayor James Brainard, Co-chair of the Mayor’s Council on Climate Protection. “We need real solutions for a real problem.”

In a show of overwhelming support, hundreds of mayors joined today’s announcement, many of them sporting green “I Signed It” buttons, reflecting their pledges to cut emissions and address the monumental threat climate change poses to the world.

For more information on the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, go to:

www.seattle.gov/mayor/climate/default.htm#cities.

For more information on what U.S. mayors are doing to battle climate change, go to:

www.usmayors.org/climateprotection/

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The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.